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NEWS RELEASE

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Judicial Council Approves Model for Minimum Education Requirements for Trial Courts

San Francisco—The Judicial Council of California today approved a model for minimum education requirements for superior court judges and court personnel.

The 28-person council also directed that a rule of court be developed to implement the model requirements. Under standard rule-making procedures, a draft rule would be circulated widely for comment and reviewed by the council before it is considered for adoption.

If the model is implemented, California would become one of 44 states with broad educational requirements.

Although California is well-known for its comprehensive judicial education program, the model approved today is the first to address education for all state trial court judges and court personnel. It was recommended by the Governing Committee of the Center for Judicial Education and Research.

The model includes 30 hours of continuing education in a three-year cycle for judges and top court administrators, with specialized training for certain judicial officers and court personnel, as follows.

- Specific content-based training for newly-appointed judges, judges who become presiding judges and supervising judges, and those who change assignment.
- Specific content-based training for new court executive officers, new court managers and supervisors, and new court personnel.

Although broader in scope, the requirements in the model would incorporate existing educational requirements, including the New Judge Orientation program and the two-week B.E. Witkin Judicial College for new judges and subordinate judicial officers; family law training for judicial officers who are newly assigned to that area; juvenile dependency training for commissioners and referees who are newly assigned to that

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area; and specific training for child support commissioners, family law facilitators, child support court clerks, child custody mediators and evaluators, and juvenile dependency mediators.

In other actions today, the Judicial Council:

- **Cameras in Court:** Adopted an amendment to Rule 980, the statewide rule governing the use of cameras in court, which defines photographing, recording, and broadcasting to include new digital technologies. These technologies will be subject to a judicial order permitting their use.
- **Guardians and Conservators:** Adopted new court rules that will prescribe the qualifications and continuing education requirements for private professional guardians and conservators that are appointed by the trial courts effective January 1, 2006.
- **Persons With Disabilities:** Amended a court rule and revised an optional form governing the process by which persons with disabilities may request an accommodation to access a court's programs, services, or activities. The changes broaden the definition of a "qualified person with a disability" to conform with changes in California law and clarify the procedures for requesting accommodations.
- **Alternative Dispute Resolution:** Adopted new and amended court rules that will help ensure that confidentiality is preserved in superior court procedures for receiving, investigating, and resolving complaints about court-program mediators serving in general civil cases, consistent with California's mediation confidentiality statutes.
- **Juvenile Dependency:** Amended a court rule that provides courts and attorneys with guidance in assessing any conflicting interests among siblings and whether representation by a single attorney is appropriate.

The complete agenda and meeting materials may be viewed at

<http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/courtadmin/jc/documents/age110405.pdf>.

Judicial Council business meetings are audiocast on the California Courts Web site at

<http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/courtadmin/jc/>.

The Judicial Council is the policymaking body of the California courts, the largest court system in the nation. Under the leadership of the Chief Justice and in accordance with the California Constitution, the council is responsible for ensuring the consistent, independent, impartial, and accessible administration of justice.